

Excursion/Regular Outing Policy

Purpose

To ensure all excursions conducted by ECMS services are planned, assessed, approved, and supervised in a manner that safeguards the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children. This policy supports compliance with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* (Regs 99–102) and ACECQA Excursions Policy Guidelines.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Approved Provider, persons with management or control, Centre Director, Nominated Supervisor, and persons in day-to-day charge.
- Early Childhood teachers, educators, staff, contractors, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others enrolled and participating in ECMS programs and services, including during offsite excursions and activities.
- All ECMS-operated Early Learning Centres and Kindergarten programs.

Policy Statement

ECMS is committed to an anti-bias approach in early childhood. ECMS operates within a framework of social justice and equity - this means we celebrate family and cultural diversity and aim to be supportive, responsive, and inclusive of all children. ECMS is committed to providing enriching educational experiences through excursions while ensuring all reasonable precautions are taken to protect children from harm or hazard. Regular outings and excursions can offer children valuable learning opportunities. Children will go on outings and excursions within the local and wider community to broaden their knowledge of the world around them and how it functions. Regular outings and excursions should be based on children's interests and the teaching and learning program and designed to support their:

- Sense of identity and wellbeing.
- Connection and contribution to their local and wider community.
- Growth as confident and involved learners.

To support the safety of all children and staff members during regular outings and excursions, including safe transport of children during these occasions, effective planning must be undertaken, including comprehensive risk assessments and management plans. This policy should be applied in conjunction with *Excursion/Regular Outing Procedure*. For each excursion/regular outing, a risk assessment will be conducted and risk management plan developed to safeguard children's health, safety and wellbeing when on a regular outing or excursion.

Principles

ECMS is a proud child safe organisation. We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all children attending our services and are committed to providing high quality education and care to children in line with regulatory requirements, approved learning frameworks, the National Quality Framework and best practice approaches. ECMS:

- Prioritises children's safety and wellbeing as a paramount responsibility: when planning any regular outings and excursions (including any other transport and movement of children outside the licensed premises). If children's safety cannot be confidently assured, then the event should not occur.
- Respects the primary role of families: their values and expectations will be considered when assessing risk and making decisions about excursions.
- Values and nurtures the uniqueness of each child: we will listen to children and include them in decision making.
- Responds to the specific needs of the children we serve: each child will be considered when evaluating the educational potential, assessing risk and making decisions about excursions.
- Recognises children are both vulnerable and capable: children will be taught to care for their own and others' health, safety and wellbeing while on regular outings and excursions.
- Regular outings and excursions should align and complement existing learning outcomes and educational growth for children and not able to be achieved through the onsite program or incursion.
- Regular outings and excursions should be inclusive of all children, with consideration to children's uniqueness, family diversity and specific additional needs.
- Planning for regular outings and excursions should be a collaborative process, involving Centre Director/ Nominated Supervisor, Area Manager, Early Childhood teachers, educators, staff, contractors, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, and children.

Document Name: Excursion/Regular Outing Policy	Next Review Date: September 2027	Document Version: 5.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: March 2014 Page 2 of 6

Definitions

Term	Definition
Excursion	An event outside the service premises as part of the children's educational program.
Regular outing	An outing conducted on a regular basis on the same day, with a consistent destination, routine and activity.
Risk assessment	A documented evaluation of potential risks associated with an excursion, associated with an excursion and regular outing. Each risk assessment must specifically consider road safety hazards (e.g. traffic exposure, parking, drop off/pick up points, pedestrian crossing, weather/visibility)

Policy Implementation

ECMS Services will:

- conduct comprehensive risk assessments and planning;
- ensure appropriate authorisations and permissions are sought in advance;
- safety checklists and risk management are followed; and,
- maintain records for all regular outings, excursions and transport/movement of all children outside the licensed premises.

Authorisation and Consent

Written authorisation must be obtained from parents/guardians prior to each excursion. Consent forms must include the:

- child's name;
- destination and purpose;
- date and duration;
- transport method;
- supervision arrangements; and,
- contact details for educators.

Regular outing authorisations can cover a 12-month period, with details kept on file.

Planning and Inclusion

- Planning for regular outings and excursions should be a collaborative process, involving Centre Director/Nominated Supervisor, Area Manager, Early Childhood teachers, educators, staff, contractors, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, and children.

Document Name: Excursion/Regular Outing Policy	Next Review Date: September 2027	Document Version: 5.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: March 2014 Page 3 of 6

- Regular outings and excursions will involve all children, including children with additional needs.
- Intent for an excursion and related documentation must be submitted to the Area Manager four (4) weeks prior to the event.
- Each risk assessment per excursion or regular outing, undertaken by an Educator/s, will identify and assess any real or potential risks that the excursion may pose to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child being taken on the excursion. Detailed strategies for eliminating, minimising and managing any real or potential risks will be included on the risk assessment report.

Supervision and Ratios

- Educator-to-child ratios must be maintained at all times.
- Additional supervision may be required depending on venue or activity risk.
- Volunteers and parents may assist but cannot be counted in ratios.

Transport and Safety

- Children must use seat belts or child restraints, if available.
- For buses with more than 12 seats, seat belts must be used as a minimum.
- All vehicles must be roadworthy and comply with safety requirements.
- Children must be closely supervised when moving near or across roads during excursions or regular outings
- Road crossing must use designated pedestrian crossings where available and children must be supported to learn and follow safe road practices.
- Adequate educator positioning (front, rear and middle of group) must be in place to ensure safe movement of children near traffic or in car parks.
- Vehicles used for child transport must comply with all relevant road laws and ECMS requirements including licensing, registration, insurance and driver suitability.
- Educators must conduct a pre-departure safety check (Seat belts, restraints, door, first aid kit, emergency contacts).

Emergency Preparedness

- A portable First Aid kit, child emergency contact details, and an ECMS service mobile phone must be taken on all excursions.
- Educators must be familiar with emergency procedures specific to the excursion site.

Documentation and Review

- All excursion documentation (risk assessments, authorisations, attendance records) must be retained in line with ECMS policies.
- This policy is to be reviewed every 2 years, or sooner if there are regulatory or operational changes.

Document Name: Excursion/Regular Outing Policy	Next Review Date: September 2027	Document Version: 5.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: March 2014 Page 4 of 6

Roles & Responsibilities

Director of Risk and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee policy governance, implementation and compliance.
Area Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with Centre Directors and Nominated Supervisors to ensure risk assessments, authorisations and attendance records are completed, accurate and protect confidentiality of records. Ensure that the person in charge of the service understands their regulatory, policy and duty of care responsibilities.
Centre Directors/ Nominated Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff, students, volunteers and contractors understand, implement and adhere to policies and procedures. Ensure all required tasks and paperwork, as defined in related procedures, is completed and accurate. Oversee risk assessments are completed accurately, including signing and dating permission forms for excursions/regular outings. Ensure that planning, evaluation of educational potential and relevance, and risk assessment of regular outings is conducted annually or whenever an excursion is proposed, before permission from parents/guardians is sought. Obtain written authorisation for an excursion from a parent or other person with authority, before a child leaves the service, as prescribed in the <i>National Regulations 2011</i> Reg 102 (5), for each regular outing every 12 months, as a minimum. Refer to the <i>Acceptance, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy</i>, if concerns are raised about the participation of a child/ren in an excursion and the parents have authorised the child/ren's participation. Be in charge of, or nominate the person to be in charge of, the excursion.
Educators, Volunteers, Students on Placement, and Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose and plan excursion based on children's interests, needs and other curriculum considerations. Read, understand and adhere to all applicable laws, regulations and ECMS policies and procedures.
Parents/Guardians/ Authorised Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read, understand and adhere to <i>Excursion/Regular Outing Policy</i> and related procedures. Read, sign and date permission forms for excursion/regular outing.

Document Name: Excursion/Regular Outing Policy	Next Review Date: September 2027	Document Version: 5.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: March 2014 Page 5 of 6

Related Legislation, Regulations and Resources

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Regs 99-102)
- National Quality Framework – Quality Area 2
- Child Safe Standards – Standard 2
- ACECQA Excursions Policy Guidelines (v. 2.3, Oct. 2024)
- VicRoads: Child Restraint Safety Guidelines

Related Policies and Procedures

- Acceptance, Delivery and Collection of Children Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Child Health and Hygiene Policy
- Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements
- Participation of Students and Volunteers Policy
- Privacy and Confidential Information Policy
- Supervision of Children Policy

Supporting Procedures

- Excursion/Regular Outing Procedure
- Supervision Risk Management Procedure

Supporting Documents

- Excursion/Regular Outing Permission Form
- Excursion Volunteer Agreement Pro Forma
- Excursion Volunteer Letter Pro Forma
- Risk Management Plan & Assessment Template

Document Version History			
Version	Reason for Amendment	Approved by	Approval date
5.0	Policy reviewed, consulted and updated	ECMS Executive	September 2025

Document Name: Excursion/Regular Outing Policy	Next Review Date: September 2027	Document Version: 5.0
Document Owner: Director of Risk & Compliance	File Location: Inside Play Resources Policy and Procedure	Release date: March 2014 Page 6 of 6